



United States Mission to the OSCE

Economic and Environmental Dimension Implementation Meeting Session 1: Follow-up to the EEF

As delivered by Michael Camuñez
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As we reflect back on the 19th Economic and Environmental Forum, which concluded just a month ago, the United States would like to highlight some of the key results of that meeting – those things that provide the most fertile ground for future OSCE efforts to take root and grow.

We have discussed a number of issues over the course of the year. We learned that one of the critical obstacles to deploying energy efficient technologies is the lack of available financing, driven in part by unawareness of the immediate return on investment made possible through lower costs. We learned that the transportation costs are a tremendous drag on economic growth across the OSCE region, where 40 percent of transit time is spent just waiting at border crossings. Most importantly, we saw the clear connection between corrupt and inefficient practices and stagnant economic performance – where complex rules and regulations only serve to inflate costs and promote corruption, where individuals facing onerous documentation requirements and other obstacles seek alternative means for moving goods across borders. If we are to achieve truly sustainable energy and transport, we must focus on the weak governance and lack of transparency so evident across our region.

That said, the EEF meeting in Prague also highlighted a number of opportunities for the OSCE to demonstrate leadership and improve the lives of citizens. On this score, the UNECE report on implementation of the OSCE's commitments in the field of energy efficiency is a fantastic starting point, and thank you, Mr. Coordinator, for acknowledging the contribution of the United States and others, and we thank the UNECE for compiling an authoritative set of facts, data, and, most importantly, concrete and realistic conclusions. As a starting point, we welcome the idea of exploring closer working relationships between the OSCE and the UNECE, the EU, and the IEA as a way for states not belonging to the G8 or the IEA25 to nevertheless benefit from their policy guidance and technical expertise, with the OSCE as the platform for cooperation. We also see the benefit of a much closer working relationship between the UNECE and the OSCE in developing and disseminating issue-specific studies, on issues such as the potential for cost savings from energy efficiency technologies and renewable energy sources within individual States. We wholeheartedly agree that the OSCE should avoid duplication of effort, and should seek to join or complement the work of other multilateral organizations, in particular the major international financial institutions already pursuing this work. In keeping with commitments going all the way back to the Helsinki Final Act, we also firmly support the idea of finding ways the OSCE could cooperate with the UNECE and other actors in market formation and development.

So where do we go from here? How do we ensure that the results of this year's EEF do not remain mere words, but get translated into action? We have before us two draft decisions that

take into account our diligent work in Vienna, Druskininkai, and Prague. We see great potential in the draft MC Decision on Energy Security in the OSCE Area, and applaud the efforts of the Lithuanian Chair and the Office of the Coordinator in preparing this draft. We see similar great potential in the draft MC Decision on Strengthening Transport Dialogue in the OSCE – in the view of the United States, both decisions provide ample scope for follow-on activities that will greatly improve implementation of our mutual commitments in the second dimension, to the benefit of citizen and State alike. We should work together to set aside differences and find common ground on measures that can only make the lives of all of our people better.

I thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Thank you, Mr. Moderator.